



UNIVERSITY OF  
LINCOLN

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
FOOD MANUFACTURING

# Food Losses in the Field

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**Field losses at potato harvest are “estimated” not measured**

## Food losses or waste categories;

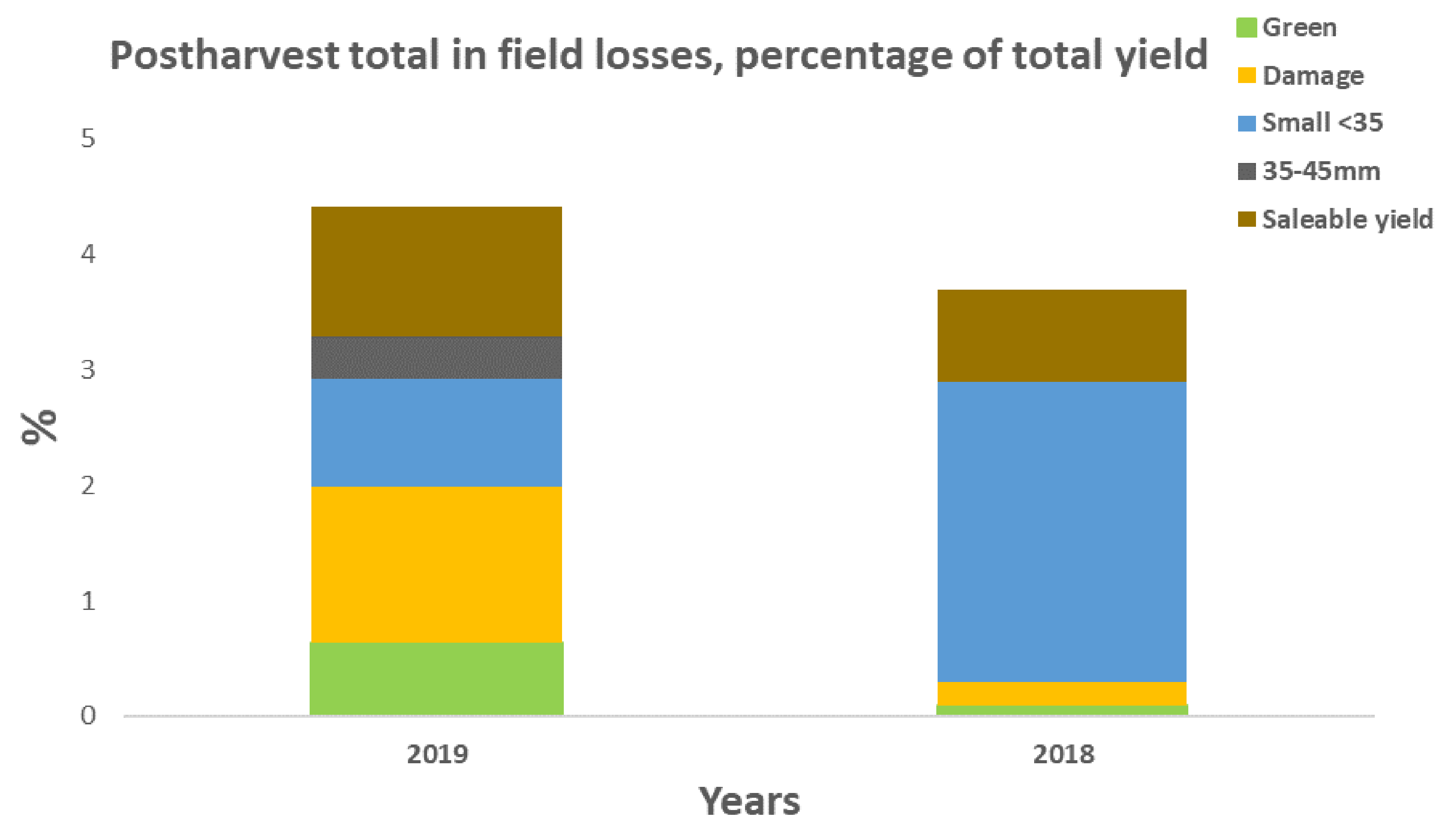
- Saleable product within contract specification
- Good product, but out of contract specification
- Diseased, green or damaged product

Seventeen sites were evaluated for process or table potatoes in 2018 and eight in 2019.

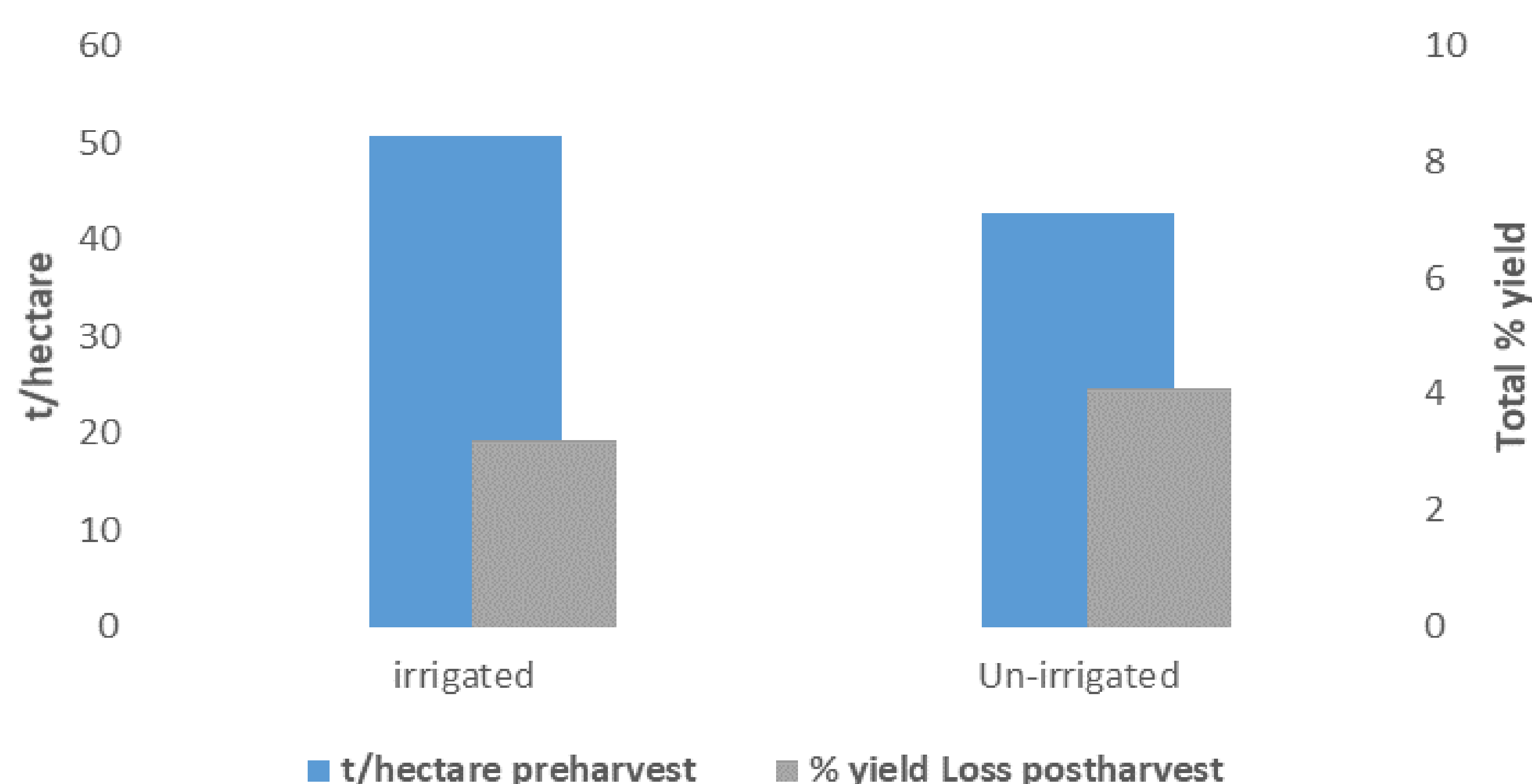
These included irrigated and non-irrigated sites.

2018 - Harvested end of August to the beginning of November - following a long, warm and dry summer period.

2019 - Harvested mid September to late November during very wet autumn.



Mean Total Field Yield and Postharvest Percentage Loss  
- irrigated and non-irrigated fields 2018



The mean percentage field yield was lower for non-irrigated fields whilst the percentage of total crop left in the field was higher. Tubers were small below markable size

## Methodology

At three locations across the field,

A five metre square area was dug (2.8m x 1.8m).

All produce was categorised into;

Green, Damage, Small < 35mm, 35 - 45mm (2019 only) and Saleable Yield.

Produce was weighed to assess field yield.

The exercise was repeated postharvest for produce remaining in the field.

Soil type, tuber variety, end market, irrigation provision and farmer comments were recorded.

Work on carrots and salad potatoes has also been completed.



**Loss assessment conditions are not always ‘perfect’, but these are the harvest conditions**



**European Union**  
European Regional  
Development Fund

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